AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated hereafter. [Strikethrough is used for deleted matter (or double square brackets "[[]]" is used if the strikethrough is not easily perceivable, *i.e.*, "4" or a punctuation mark) and underlined is used for added matter.]

1. (Currently Amended) A method of determining a price at which a supplier provides a commodity to a customer, the method being performed by the supplier and comprising:

(a) characterising the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity;

(b) receiving information from the customer specifying the commodity required;

(c) receiving notification of the use of a quantity of the commodity by the customer; and

(d) determining a price for the commodity used, the determined price being dependent on the quantity of the commodity used, a level of commercial risk associated with the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity, and an industry average price for the commodity at the time of determination of the price, wherein, if usage monitoring indicates that the customer has a need for more or less of the commodity, the method further comprises effecting provision of more or less of the commodity from the supplier to the customer.

2. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of receiving notification of the use of a quantity of the commodity further comprises monitoring the customer's usage of the commodity.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the customer's usage history of the commodity, as monitored by the supplier, is used to dynamically reassess the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity[[,]] and hence the associated level of commercial risk.

5. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, in the step of characterising the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity, the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity is characterised as either constant growth, explosive growth or volatile growth, and wherein, in the step of determining a price for the commodity used, the corresponding level of commercial risk is determined respectively as low, high or intermediate.

6. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, in the step of receiving information from the customer specifying the commodity required, the commodity is selected from a plurality of alternatives in the a same category of commodity.

7. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the same category of commodity is one of a plurality of categories and a selection is made from more than one category, and wherein the alternatives available for selection in each category are modified in response to customer's preference data, or on the basis of previously-selected commodities.

8. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1 for determining the price of commoditized solution elements in the information technology industry.

9. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the categories of commodities include storage capacity, server processing capability, and level of support service required.

10. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein, for the commodities of storage capacity or server processing capability, the step of receiving notification of the use of a quantity of the commodity is performed using monitoring and reporting software or hardware installed on a server of the customer.

11. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1 executed using a computer program.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium for storing a computer program operable, when executed by a computer, to determine a price at which a supplier provides a commodity to a customer, the computer program being operable to:

(a) receive input characterising the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity;

(b) receive input specifying the commodity required by the customer;

(c) receive input comprising notification of the use of a quantity of the commodity by the customer; and

(d) determine a price for the commodity used, the determined price being dependent on the quantity of the commodity used, a level of commercial risk associated with the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity, and an industry average price for the commodity at the time, wherein, if usage data indicates that the customer has a need for more or less of the commodity, the program is operable to effect provision of more or less of the commodity from the supplier to the customer.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium program as claimed in claim 12, the computer program further operable to receive data from a remote device specifying the usage of the commodity by the customer.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium program as claimed in claim 13, the computer program further operable to interpret the customer's usage history of the commodity to dynamically reassess the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity[[,]] and hence the associated level of commercial risk.

16. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium program as claimed in claim 12, wherein the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity is characterised as either constant growth, explosive growth or volatile growth, and wherein the corresponding level of commercial risk is determined respectively as low, high or intermediate.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium program as claimed in claim 12 wherein, when receiving input specifying the commodity required by the customer, the commodity is selected from a plurality of alternatives in the a same category of commodity.

18. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium program as claimed in claim 17, wherein the same category of commodity is one of a plurality of categories and a user makes a selection from more than one category, and wherein the computer program modifies the alternatives available for selection in each category following input of customer preference data, or on the basis of previously-selected commodities.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium program as claimed in claim 12, the computer program operable to determine the price of commoditized solution elements in the information technology industry.

20. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium program as claimed in claim 19, wherein the categories of commodities include server storage capacity, server processing capability, and level of support service required.

21. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium program as claimed in claim 19, wherein the data specifying the usage of the commodity by the customer is supplied from monitoring software or hardware installed on a server of the customer.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently Amended) A price determination device comprising a processor operable to implement a method of determining a price at which a supplier provides a commodity to a customer, the method comprising:

(a) characterising ~~the~~ nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity;

(b) receiving information from the customer specifying the commodity required;

(c) receiving notification of the use of a quantity of the commodity by the customer; and

(d) determining a price for the commodity used, the determined price being dependent on the quantity of the commodity used, a level of commercial risk associated with the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity, and an industry average price for the commodity at the time of determination of the price.

24. (Currently Amended) A price determination device comprising a processor executing a program to determine a price at which a supplier provides a commodity to a customer, the program being operable to cause the processor to:

(a) receive input characterising the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity;

(b) receive input specifying the commodity required by the customer;

(c) receive input comprising notification of the use of a quantity of the commodity by the customer; and

(d) determine a price for the commodity used, the determined price being dependent on the quantity of the commodity used, a level of commercial risk associated with the nature of growth of the customer's usage of the commodity, and an industry average price for the commodity at the time.